

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

POLICE RECRUITMENT

FOUNDATION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Newark is a city of over 400,000 people, with a minority population of between 50% and 60%. Yet less than 12% of its 1,500 policemen are Negroes. Why?

Although the reasons are many and complex, there are certain basic factors that must be considered.

A survey taken for the Newark Human Rights Commission in 1958 showed that nearly 50% of the Negro population believed that police brutality existed.

Two campaigns for a Civilian Police Review Board further divided the community.

Recent disorders have again raised the cry of police brutality, and have further deepened the distrust the Negro community feels toward the Newark Police Department.

This mutual distrust not only affects the Negro community adversely, but also has a demoralizing effect on the city's policemen. In a city whose population is more than 50% black, this is an intolerable situation. Yet there are solutions.

In the early 1800's other ethnic minorities, especially the Italians and Irish, also complained of police brutality. As these groups became assimilated into the Police Department, these complaints ceased. It is now the Negro community's turn to have its members fairly assimilated in the police force.

From past experience, it is obvious that normal police recruitment procedures have not been successful in attracting young Negroes to the Police Department on any large scale. Some of the reasons for this failure are obvious:

- a: Many Southern Negroes have had bad experiences with the police in their home towns.
- b: Until recently, the lack of promotion opportunities for Negroes has made a police career seem unattractive.
- c: Many young Negro men fear that they will ostracized by their community if they become policemen.

For the sake of Newark's future, it is imperative that more Negroes be induced to join the Police Department as soon as possible... and that these new recruits be totally assimilated into all departments or the force.

In order to accomplish this end, a new approach must be devised to reach the Negro community. This approach must be specifically designed to appeal to the newly awakened racial pride of young Negro men; and it must encourage the Negro community as a whole, to look upon a police career for its young men as wholly laudatory, and benefitting the entire community.

The Frederick Douglass Police Recruitment Foundation shall serve this purpose. It will initiate training and recruitment programs especially designed to motivate young Negro men to want to become policemen, and it will train them to pass the examinations and meet all other requirements needed to become a member of the Newark Police Department.

A NEW APPROACH TO POLICE RECRUITMENT

The Frederick Douglass Police Recruitment Foundation shall use an entirely new approach in attempting to recruit young Negro men for the Newark Police Department.

Instead of merely appealing to their personal ambitions for a secure and well-paying future, the approach normally used, the Frederick Douglass Foundation will attempt to appeal to their sense of racial pride, their sense of responsibility for their people, and their pride in the progress of their community.

Although the personal advantages of a police career will, of course, be demonstrated, major emphasis will be placed on the fact that as a police officer they will be able to serve their community at the same time that they serve their future.

Recruitment discussions will not avoid the subject of police-community tensions, but will, instead, stress the historical significance of police tensions with other ethnic minorities in the past. The subject of Irish and Italian resentment towards the police will be frankly discussed, and the prospective recruits own knowledge utilized to prove to him that these past tensions were eased only when members of such ethnic minorities were fully assimilated into local police forces.

Recruitment efforts will be made through personal contacts at schools, army discharge depots, recreation centers and other similar locations.

However, major emphasis will be placed on having the recruiter address Negro church, civic and social groups. This will serve a double purpose. Firstly, to spread the news of the Police Department's interest in young Negro recruits as widely as possible, and also to begin to change the attitude of the Negro community towards a police career for its young men.

Because of past tensions between the Police Department and the Negro community, Negro policemen have, heretofore, not been looked upon too kindly by their own people. They have been viewed with

suspicion as having "gone to the other side", as abandoning their own people in order to join forces with the power structure, almost as becoming oppressors themselves.

This community attitude must now be changed, and only frank, public discussions of the issues involved can change it. No area of police-community relations shall be avoided during these discussions. Every question shall be answered frankly, and an attempt will be made to explain the historical background of these tensions, with a view towards formulating new approaches to solving old problems.

The recruiter shall attempt to engender pride in the Negro's past contributions to society, and stress his responsibility to assist in the continued growth of all society, by taking his rightful place on all its levels. Attitudes must be changed from viewing the Negro policeman as an oppressor of his people, to viewing him as a protector of his people.

C In order to be fully successful, of course, the Frederick Douglass Police Recruitment Foundation must have the full cooperation of the Newark Police Department. It must be able to demonstrate to the Negro community that the Police Department is willing to assimilate Negro policemen in all departments, that promotion opportunities are fully fair and equal, and that its sole aim is the protection of all people regardless of race or creed.

With such demonstratable cooperation, the Frederick Douglass Foundation will be able to take a long step towards equal representation and full integration of the Newark Police Department.

We believe the peace and stability of Newark is at stake.

READINESS TRAINING PROGRAM

The Frederick Douglass Police Recruitment Foundation shall serve a double purpose:

- a: to locate and encourage prospective Negro police recruits
- b: to prepare these prospective recruits to pass all tests and meet other police requirements

The Readiness Training Program shall consist of a full-day class schedule lasting for thirty days per program.

Trainees will receive coaching in basic vocabulary, spelling, sentence structure and mathematics, from the 7th grade through High School levels.

Other daily classes will teach city and state governmental structure, and the applied procedure of taking exams.

A daily session will be devoted to discussing a police officer's duty to his department and the community, with special emphasis on the particular problems faced by a minority-group officer in his relations with the department and with the public.

Some time during each session will also be devoted to orientation trips to such places as police headquarters, courts, and penal institutions in order to familiarize the trainee with the organization of law enforcement agencies.

Physical readiness will be included in the training program as well. Daily classes in calisthenics will attempt to assist the trainees in building their bodies to meet basic physical requirements. Overweight and underweight trainees will be shown how to attain the proper weight, and generally good physical bearing and appearance will be encouraged.

In toto, the Frederick Douglass Police Recruitment Foundation shall attempt to present Negro police recruits fully trained and prepared to meet all mental and physical requirements of the Newark Police Department...and prepared also to serve that department...and the community...with fairness and honor at all times.